

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system includes a plurality of vending machines communicating wirelessly with a centralized consolidation unit. The consolidation unit communicates via a pre-established communications network, such as a wired or wireless telephone network with a data collection center. A method of polling a vending machine having a wireless transceiver includes sending a first wireless signal to the wireless transceiver of the vending machine, the first signal soliciting a status response from the vending machine, and receiving a second wireless signal from the transceiver of the vending machine, the second signal including the status response which includes information pertaining to a status of the vending machine. The status information may pertain to an inventory level, money deposits, maintenance status or security status of the vending machine.